

American Opinion Summary

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CUBA

Announcement of Russian plans to build a "fishing port" in Havana Bay stirs considerable anger and concern. This "brings us closer to an official Communist acknowledgement" of Cuba's transformation to a "Soviet military base," the New York Herald Tribune warns (similarly, Wash. News and Star). To the Washington Post, this is "another pinprick," increasing the "danger that the Soviet Union may misjudge the American temper and sail over the brink in the Caribbean." "The closest surveillance is in order."

But "more than routine surveillance" is needed, adds the Baltimore Sun, for the Soviet is very probably creating both a nest for spy craft and a naval outpost. Yet, the situation "does not require panic in the streets," the Sun contends, but "requires attention within the guidelines laid down by President Kennedy." The Philadelphia Inquirer suggests that while closer sea and air patrolling will obviously be needed, "an outright refusal to put up with it, based on the Monroe Doctrine, and our national interests, would not be out of order, either. The "enhanced danger of a Cuba under communism," says the New York Times, "will become actual rather than potential if the port is built."

Sen. Keating (R-N.Y.) suggests bringing the matter before the OAS, "in the strongest terms possible"; and Sen. Thurmond (D-S.C.) calls for "meaningful" U.S. action "designed to eradicate this growing Communist cancer."

The continuing trade with Cuba by NATO chartered ships evokes increasing criticism. The possibility that the Cuban developments could be "a diversion" for a Soviet knock out blow against Berlin should make Cuba "the immediate and direct concern of all our NATO allies," the New York Herald Tribune maintains. "Consequently, in their own self-interest, as well as ours," we might expect them to refrain from supplying these ships [similarly, Wash. Star, Providence Journal, Wm. S. White, Robert Estabrook of Wash. Post; Sens. Morse (D-Ore.), Javits and Keating (R-N.Y.)].

"These shipments could be curbed by U.S. action--and probably should be," declares the Philadelphia Inquirer. Sen. Lausche (D-Ohio) warns that the allies' response would "have an imprint" on Congress's dealing with future affairs affecting the Atlantic Alliance. But the Chicago News doubts that "our allies could legally restrain" these cargo carriers, and cautions that "harsh pressure on our allies through foreign aid is more likely to create resentment than cooperation."

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